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SUBJECT: JAPANESE MORNING PRESS HIGHLIGHTS 05/14/09

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3) Prime Minister's Official Residence (Kantei)

Prime Minister's schedule, May 13

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
May 14, 2009

07:31

Took a walk around his official residence.

10:15

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Met at Kantei with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsumoto.

12:38

Met with Chief Cabinet Secretary Kawamura.

12:57

Attended meeting of LDP Lower House members in Diet building.

13:02

Attended Lower House plenary session.

13:15

Met at Kantei with Upper House member Katsuhito Asano joined by Kawamura.

15:27

Stood and chatted with former Prime Minister Abe.

15:32

Attended Lower House plenary session.

15:37

Stood and chatted with State Minister of Consumer Affairs Noda. Met later with Agriculture Minister Ishiba and Defense Minister Hamada.

15:42

Attended Lower House Budget Committee session.

18:43

Attended LDP Lower House members' meeting.

18:52

Attended Lower House plenary session.

20:24

Made informal report to the Emperor at Imperial Palace and attended Imperial Attestation Ceremony for Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Asano.

21:54

Took picture with Asano. Met afterwards with Kawamura and Asano.

22:21

Returned to his official residence.

4) Hatoyama, Okada declare candidacies for DPJ presidency

ASAHI (Top Play) (Full)
May 14, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Vice President Katsuya Okada yesterday revealed to reporters in the Diet building his intention to run in the DPJ presidential election on May 16. Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama also last night announced his candidacy. Both will today formally declare their candidacies at press conferences. The

DPJ presidential race to pick the replacement of Ichiro Ozawa will likely be on one-on-one battle between Okada and Hatoyama.

Okada expressed his determination for the new DPJ president, saying:

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"In order for the DPJ to move ahead toward a change of government, I have renewed my determination to become president of the DPJ and the leader of Japan. I have the experience of serving as DPJ head. A change in administration is urgent for Japan. Achieving a change in government is my political mission."

He met yesterday noon with President Ichiro Ozawa to convey his intention to run in the election of the new DPJ president.

He also stated:

"(If I win the presidency), I basically will not drastically change the present DPJ policies, which are the improved version of the campaign pledges for the 2004 House of Councillors election and the 2005 House of Representatives race made while I was party president. I want to make them better and more specific."

Meanwhile, Hatoyama told the press corps last night:

"If I could serve (the country), I would like to devote myself to do so. The DPJ must continue the Ozawa-ism that the party will win the election, playing up our policy to the public. It is also necessary to heighten the openness and transparency of the party."

He intends to take over Ozawa's policy of placing priority on the daily lives of the people.

5) Survey of DPJ lawmakers shows Hatoyama ahead in presidential race with Okada trying to catch up

NIKKEI (Page 1) (Full)
May 14, 2009

Vigorous efforts to secure support for Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama and Vice President Katsuya Okada in the party's presidential election began on May 13. According to a survey of DPJ Diet members by Nihon Keizai Shimbun through interviews, Hatoyama has the support of the Diet members' group close to Ichiro Ozawa and members of the House of Councillors and is close to gaining the support of a majority. Okada, on the other hand, announced his candidacy on May 13 and is doing everything to catch up. The two will announce their candidacy formally at a news conference on May 14.

Only the 221 DPJ Diet members (112 from the House of Representatives and 109 from the House of Councillors) have the right to vote in the presidential election on May 16. Following is an analysis of the position of 184 lawmakers, or 83 PERCENT of the total, based on Nihon Keizai Shimbun's interviews, as of May 13.

In addition to his own group, Hatoyama has broad support from the Ozawa group, which has supported President Ichiro Ozawa, and lawmakers who were formerly Japan Socialist Party and Democratic Socialist Party members. Specifically, he has secured over 50 PERCENT support among Upper House members. This shows that he has the strong support of forces hoping for the continuation of the policy line of the Ozawa leadership.

On the other hand, Okada has secured the support of about 30 PERCENT of the Diet members, most of whom belonging to the group close to Vice President Seiji Maehara and Public Relations Committee Chairman Yoshihiko Noda. Both have kept their distance from Ozawa. He has

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support comparable to Hatoyama among Lower House members. In addition to broadening his support among the mid-ranking and junior

lawmakers, the Okada camp will attempt to enlist support in the group led by Acting President Naoto Kan that is divided on which candidate to support, and recruit defectors from the forces supporting the Ozawa leadership.

Okada met Ozawa on May 13 to convey his intention to run in the presidential race. He later told reporters in the Diet that he is now "even more strongly motivated to run in the presidential election." He will announce his main policies when he formally announces his candidacy on May 14. Hatoyama also told reporters in Tokyo on the same evening that, "I will announce my candidacy formally on May 14."

6) Poll: 61 PERCENT support Okada, 18 PERCENT back Hatoyama

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
May 14, 2009

The Nihon Keizai Shimbun conducted an online poll yesterday about the upcoming presidential election of the Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto). In the poll, 61.4 PERCENT of the respondents answered that they would like DPJ Vice President Katsuya Okada to become DPJ president, with 18.9 PERCENT preferring DPJ Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama. "Neither Okada nor Hatoyama" accounted for 16.1 PERCENT, and "don't know" for 3.6 PERCENT.

The poll was carried out as a questionnaire survey of Nikkei Net Plus member readers starting at around 4 p.m. yesterday. Answers were obtained from 7,102 persons.

7) Poll: 25 PERCENT back Okada for DPJ leader, Hatoyama at 13 PERCENT

MAINICHI (Top play) (Abridged)
May 14, 2009

In the wake of Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) President Ichiro Ozawa's resignation, the Mainichi Shimbun conducted a spot nationwide public opinion survey on May 12-13. In the survey, respondents were asked who they thought would be appropriate to head the DPJ after Ozawa, with the names of seven DPJ lawmakers given. In this popularity ranking, DPJ Vice President Katsuya Okada topped all others at 25 PERCENT and outstripped 13 PERCENT for DPJ Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama. Respondents were also asked if they thought Ozawa has fulfilled his accountability on his state-funded secretary's violation of the Political Funds Control Law. To this question, a total of 83 PERCENT answered "no." The figure shows that the public's severe view of Ozawa continues even after he has stepped down. The Aso cabinet's support rate rose 3 points from last month to 27 PERCENT.

Ranking next to Okada and Hatoyama, DPJ Deputy President Naoto Kan was at 12 PERCENT, followed by DPJ Vice President Seiji Maehara at 8 PERCENT, and DPJ Policy Research Committee Chairman Akira Nagatsuma at 5 PERCENT. "None" accounted for 29 PERCENT, but the party race seems to be a straight fight between Hatoyama and Okada. In the survey, Okada was nearly two times higher than Hatoyama.

8) DPJ presidential race: Hatoyama's party footing stronger than Okada's, Okada leads Hatoyama in public opinion polls

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TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top Play) (Excerpts)
May 14, 2009

Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) Vice President Katsuya Okada and Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama yesterday afternoon respectively announced their candidacies for the election of the new DPJ president on May 16. Since there is no other party member to run for the election, the DPJ presidential race will be a contest between Okada and Hatoyama. Hatoyama's party footing is stronger than Okada's, but Okada leads Hatoyama in public opinion polls. Therefore, DPJ lawmakers still remain undecided for which candidate they support.

They will hold today a press conference separately to clarify their political visions.

Okada told reporters in the Diet building: "I have renewed my determination to become DPJ president and the leader of Japan." He then stressed: "A change of government is urgently needed. Bringing about that is my political mission."

9) Cabinet support slightly up to 27 PERCENT

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Abridged)
May 14, 2009

The Aso cabinet's support rate, which dropped to 11 PERCENT in this February's survey, rebounded after Democratic Party of Japan (Minshuto) President Ichiro Ozawa's state-funded secretary was arrested in connection with Nishimatsu Construction Co.'s illicit political donations. This time around, the support rate went up to 27 PERCENT. However, the nonsupport rate was 52 PERCENT, still topping a half.

In the breakdown of public support for political parties, the ruling Liberal Democratic Party stood at 27 PERCENT, with the DPJ at 24 PERCENT. The LDP outstripped the DPJ for the first time since the September 2008 survey taken shortly after the Aso cabinet came into office.

10) Government plans to extend Diet session for 45 days; Extra budget clears Lower House

YOMIURI (Top play) (Excerpts)
May 14, 2009

The House of Representatives at a plenary session last night approved by a majority vote consisting of the ruling bloc the fiscal 2009 supplementary budget and a tax system-related bill featuring a measure allowing a limited gift-tax cut. The bills were immediately sent to the House of Councillors. After the Lower House's approval, the government and ruling parties began moves to extend the ordinary Diet session, which is scheduled to end on June 3, for 45 days or until July 18 to ensure the passage of the tax bill and other budget-related bills.

Members of the Democratic Party of Japan, the Social Democratic Party and the People's New Party boycotted the Lower House vote, insisting deliberations were insufficient. The Japanese Communist Party voted against the bills. Under the Constitution, a supplementary budget automatically clears the Diet 30 days after

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Lower House approval, even if the Upper House does not vote on the bill. Therefore, the fiscal 2009 extra budget will clear the Diet by June 12.

As for the tax system-related bill, the Lower House will be able to adopt it for a second time on July 12 or later under the so-called 60-day rule stipulated in the Constitution, even if the DPJ and other opposition parties adopt tactics to delay deliberations in the Diet.

Prime Minister Taro Aso is eager to enact other key bills as well, including antipiracy legislation, which had been sent to the Upper House in April. The ruling bloc intends to extend the Diet session to ensure the passage of these bills.

According to observers, Aso is believed to be planning to dissolve the Lower House after achieving certain results, passing the extra budget-related bills and attending the summit of the Group of Eight major countries set for July 8-10. The observers say the planned Diet extension is intended to make it easier for Aso to dissolve the Lower House. Some in the ruling bloc think chances have grown for dissolution in mid-July.

Nevertheless, the Emperor and the Empress are scheduled to visit Canada and Hawaii on July 3-17, so dissolving the chamber during that period seems difficult. This may be the reason why the ruling

bloc intends to extend the Diet session until July 18.

11) Konoike's resignation a damper on Aso administration's effort to restore public support

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Excerpts)
May 14, 2009

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshitada Konoike resigned from his post yesterday due to a weekly magazine article on his extramarital affair with a woman, dealing a serious blow to the Aso cabinet, which has seen improved popularity recently. Konoike's alleged affair has been reported on continuously, and Prime Minister Taro Aso is drawing criticism for his failure to address the matter. Nevertheless, as seen in his refusal to accept responsibility for putting Konoike in the post, Aso has a weak sense of crisis. Criticism of Aso might grow stronger.

Earlier this month, Aso was informed of the prospect that the weekly magazine would carry an article on a trip Konoike took with the woman in late April. But Aso indicated to his aides that Konoike would not have to resign as long as he carried out his duties properly. When Konoike's extramarital affair emerged in January, Aso did not regard it as a problem either, saying it was a private matter.

On May 12, the article's details became clear, including the fact that Konoike had used his JR railway free pass. This changed the situation altogether. Konoike then asked Aso to let him step down from the post due to "health problems." Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura advised Aso to steel himself and accept Konoike's resignation. After a moment of hesitation, Aso decided to let Konoike go.

Konoike, who joined the faction headed by Aso when it was launched in 2006, devoted himself to Aso's bid for the LDP presidency. This

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explains why Aso hesitated to accept Konoike's resignation and has continued to claim that he resigned for "health problems."

12) Aso denies responsibility for appointing Konoike as deputy chief cabinet secretary

MAINICHI (Page 2) (Abridged slightly)
May 14, 2009

Joichi Sato, Ai Yokota

Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshitada Konoike, 68, stepped down from the post yesterday due to an alleged extramarital affair. Touching on this matter, Prime Minister Taro Aso indicated yesterday that he has no responsibility for appointing Konoike to the post, saying, "I do not know if I should be held responsible for the health (of a person who resigned for health reasons) for appointing him." A view has emerged not only in the opposition bloc but also from within the government and the ruling camp that Aso should be held responsible for appointing Konoike to the post. Aso's inaccurate understanding of his responsibility is likely to draw more criticism.

Konoike made a trip to a spa with a female acquaintance in late April when the government was stepping up measures against the new influenza. Aso defended Konoike, saying: "Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Konoike was not in charge. There was no problem as long as he was reachable."

Meanwhile, Democratic Party of Japan Secretary General Yukio Hatoyama harshly criticized (Aso and Konoike) yesterday, saying: "(Konoike) made the trip for pleasure when the taskforce against the new influenza was just launched and when the prime minister was out of the country. Such was not permissible. The prime minister's responsibility is extremely weighty for appointing (Konoike) to the post."

13) Poll: Okinawa's public opinion split over Futenma offshore

relocation

ASAHI (Page 29) (Abridged)
May 14, 2009

The Japanese and U.S. governments have agreed to relocate the U.S. military's Futenma airfield in Okinawa Prefecture's Ginowan City to the prefecture's northern coastal city of Nago, and Okinawa Gov. Hirokazu Nakaima has been calling for the airfield's relocation site to be moved to an offshore area. The Asahi Shimbun conducted a telephone-based public opinion survey in the prefecture, asking respondents if they supported the governor's proposal of offshore relocation. In response to this question, public opinion was split, with 39 PERCENT saying "yes" and 44 PERCENT saying "no." The survey was conducted with the Okinawa Times on May 9-10.

Respondents were also asked if they supported the planned relocation of Futenma airfield within Okinawa Prefecture. To this question, negative responses substantially outnumbered affirmative ones, with "no" accounting for 68 PERCENT and "yes" for 18 PERCENT. Even among those who support the governor, "no" accounted for 60 PERCENT, and "yes" for only 28 PERCENT.

Meanwhile, the Defense Ministry is now going through procedures to
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assess the Futenma alternative facility's potential impact on its environs. The ministry says the planned construction of a new base in Nago City to replace Futenma airfield will have little impact on the environment. In the survey, 80 PERCENT were negative and 7 PERCENT affirmative when respondents were asked if this account from the ministry was convincing.

The Japanese and U.S. governments finalized their agreement in 2006 to realign the U.S. military presence in Japan, including Futenma relocation and Okinawa-based U.S. Marines' transfer to Guam. The construction of an alternative base in Nago City is to be completed in 2014. Asked whether to support this agreement itself, 43 PERCENT gave negative answers, with 28 PERCENT affirmative.

14) Guam relocation agreement secures diet approval

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)
May 14, 2009

The agreement to relocate U.S. Marines from Okinawa Prefecture to Guam, which incorporates expenditures for the consolidation of facilities following the relocation of U.S. Marines based in Okinawa to Guam, passed the Diet on May 13. The accord was voted down by opposition parties at an Upper House plenary session held on the morning of the same day. The Lower and Upper Houses failed to share common view at a joint session of both chambers of the Diet held later. For this reason, the accord was eventually approved in line with the constitutional superiority of the Lower House, which had already given its approval. This is the second time that an agreement was voted down in the Upper House and passed the Diet in line with the constitutional superiority of the Lower House, following the special agreement on Japan's shouldering of host-nation financial support for U.S. military stationed in Japan or the so-called sympathy budget last year. The agreement will likely take effect before the end of May.

The agreement states that the Japanese government will disburse up to 2.8 billion dollars to finance the consolidation of facilities needed for the transfer of U.S. Marines and their family members to Guam. It also states that the Guam relocation is to be implemented as a package deal with the construction in Nago City of a heliport to be relocated from the U.S. Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station.

However, the government and Okinawa Prefecture remain at odds over the relocation site for Futenma functions, the primary concern in U.S. forces in Japan realignment. The government intends to reach an agreement before year's end with a possibility of moving the relocation site slightly further seaward from the originally proposed in mind. However, senior prefectural government officials want to seek a major concession from the government. Foreign

Minister Nakaone at a meeting of the Upper House Foreign Relations and Defense Committee on the 12th stressed his view that if some projects suffer a setback, it would affect the entire plan. Whether the Guam relocation plan will go smoothly remains to be seen.

15) MSDF escorts Peace Boat off Somalia: "We are against you, but protect us"

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)
May 14, 2009

It was learned on May 13 that Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF)

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escort ships deployed in waters off Somalia on an anti-piracy mission had escorted a passenger ship of the civilian international exchange group "Peace Boat." The "Peace Boat" is opposed to the MSDF's dispatch for the anti-piracy mission, so the inconsistency of this with its position is likely to raise eyebrows.

The two MSDF escort ships guarded seven Japan-related vessels in the Gulf of Aden off Somalia from May 11-13. One of them was a Peace Boat passenger ship on a tour. The "Peace Boat" is a group founded by Social Democratic Party member of the House of Representatives Kiyomi Tsujimoto in 1983 when she was a student at Waseda University. The purpose of the boat tour is to engage in activities such as exchanges with NGOs and students at its ports of call.

According to the Peace Boat office, the company planning and executing the sea voyage consulted with the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism's Liaison Office for Anti-Piracy Measures, which is in charge of coordination for MSDF escort operations, and it was decided that the ship join the convoy of vessels to be escorted by the MSDF.

The Peace Boat had signed the joint statement of citizens' groups opposed to the MSDF dispatch. An official at its office said that, "It is unfortunate that the MSDF was sent instead of the Japan Coast Guard, but regardless of our position, the safety of the participants comes first. We respect the decision (of the company) to request escort."

16) Ex-Defense Secretary Cohen hopes for exercise of right to collective self-defense at security symposium

YOMIURI (Page 2) (Full)
May 14, 2009

The "Second Security Symposium" on Japan's security policy (sponsored by the Net Journalist Association in cooperation with Yomiuri Shimbun and others) was held at the Keidanren Hall in Otemachi, Tokyo on May 13.

In his keynote speech, former secretary of defense William Cohen discussed the security policy of the Obama administration and said that, "More than the past administration, it will welcome Japan's becoming able to participate in collective defense activities in order for Japan and the U.S. to deal with common problems as equal partners," expressing his expectations on Japan's exercise of the right to collective self-defense.

Meanwhile, Keiichiro Asao, Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) official in charge of defense, explained the party's foreign and security policy. He stressed that the DPJ's policy is "basically the same as the security policy of the Liberal Democratic Party and New Komeito. We have no intention of introducing fundamental changes to the Japan-US security arrangements."

17) Japan Coast Guard planned to dispatch destroyer during Iran-Iraq War

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Page 1) (Slightly abridged)
May 14, 2009

In the closing days of the Iran-Iraq War, the Japan Coast Guard decided to dispatch a destroyer to the Persian Gulf (1980-1988) to

guard Japanese vessels, according to Diet records. But then Chief Cabinet Secretary Masaharu Gotoda, at the risk of losing his post, raised an objection, so the plan was not carried out.

Gotoda disapproved Transport Minister Hashimoto's decision

According to the book of proceedings of the House of Representatives' Finance Committee in April 1991, then Finance Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto said when asked for his view about the Gulf War: "I assumed the current post when the Iran-Iraq War was being fought intensely. At that time, I decided to send destroyers if Japan Coast Guard (JCG) officials approved it." He further replied: "I also promised to be on board the first ship, but fortunately, the war was soon over."

In an interview with the Tokyo Shimbun, Masakazu Henmi, 76, who was serving as JCG Policing and Rescue Department head at that time, admitted for the first time that the JCG had decided to dispatch a destroyer to the Persian Gulf in 1987 and had been studying details of the plan.

Only the destroyer "Mizuho" was available, but the JCG judged it possible for the escort ship to carry out long-term operations if fuel and food were supplied from countries along the Persian Gulf and other friendly countries. Since it was difficult for only one vessel to engage in the escort mission, the JCG planned to send information on safe navigation in the gulf to Japanese and foreign vessels.

The reason why the plan was not implemented was not the end of the war. According to Atsuyuki Sassa, then Cabinet Security Office head, Gotoda opposed the dispatch of Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force ships or JCG destroyers at the risk of losing his post, citing as the reason that Japan might become involved in the war.

18) China concludes Japanese ambassador paid 3 million yen in return for secret information in espionage case

ASAHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)
May 14, 2009

(Kenji Minemura, Beijing)

A district court in Beijing concluded in a ruling on May 5 that Ambassador to China Yuji Miyamoto had given 207,000 yuan (approximately 3 million yen) to former Xinhua News Agency' foreign affairs bureau chief Lei Jiafu in return for secret information. Lei was given a 18-year jail sentence on charges of leaking national secrets,. Miyamoto commented: "Although I cannot make any comment on individual exchanges in diplomatic activities, I have acted according to the local law, so I think there was no problem."

The written indictment entered the name of Miyamoto, but the judgment document noted "embassy member." In China, the details of a trial involving national secrets are not made public, but the fact was unveiled through informed sources.

Xinhua News Agency is under the control of the Chinese government and provides internal information to its leadership. Chinese authorities are tightening control to prevent information leakage, but information activities by a diplomat have unusually come to light. It is quite unprecedented that an espionage charge was

applied in a case involving an ambassador.

According the judgment, Lei provided information (to Miyamoto) on Chinese foreign policies from September 2006, just after Miyamoto assumed his post, to July 2007 and received money. On Nov. 8 2006, Lei informed the Japanese ambassador of Chinese sanction measures against North Korea for its nuclear test in October, including suspension of remittances.

During a period between July 2003 and August 2005, Lei also leaked information to then South Korean envoy in China about the schedule for President Hu Jiantao's visit to North Korea, secret contact between the U.S. and North Korea in the framework of the six-party talks, and other matters. In return, he received 3,000 dollars (about 295,000 yen), 3,000 yuan (about 43,000 yen), and a golf set.

In China, a senior member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences was detained this January on suspicion of leaking information of North Korea, and a Chinese ambassador for the North Korean nuclear issue was detained in late 2006 on suspicion of leaking information of North Korean leader Kim Jong Il's visit to China to a foreign news company.

ZUMWALT